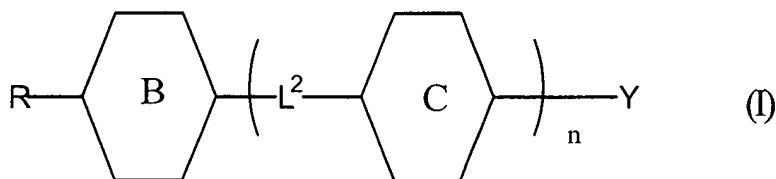


AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 1, 18 and 19, as follows. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

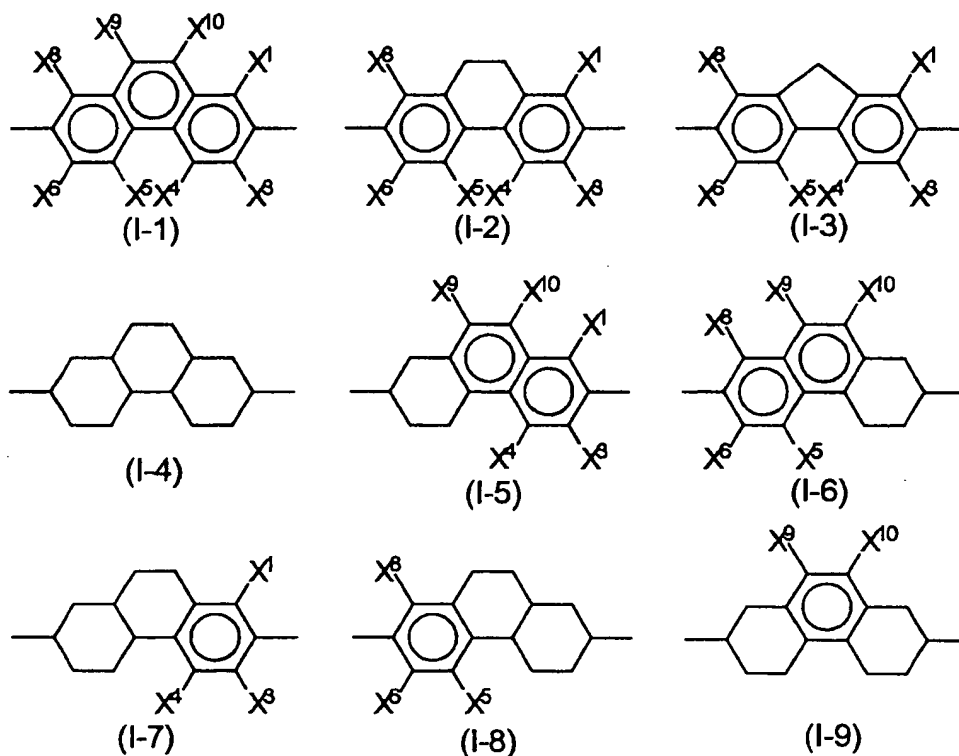
Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A fused ring compound represented by a general formula (I)



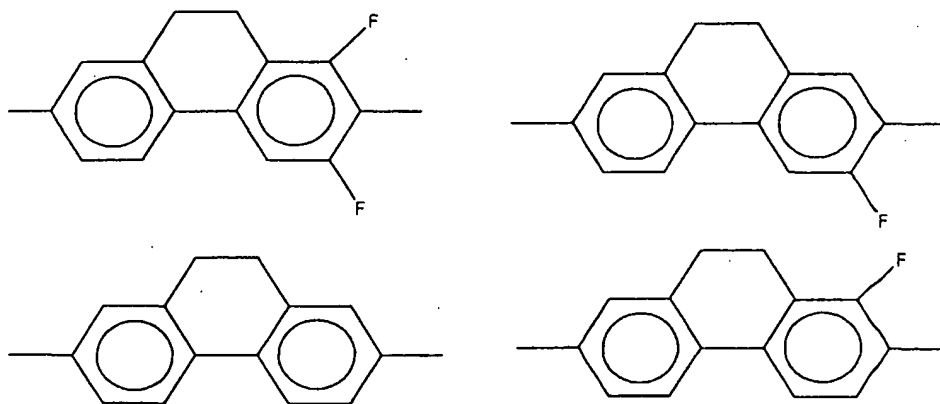
(wherein, R represents an alkyl group or alkoxyl group of 1 to 16 carbon atoms, an alkenyl group of 2 to 16 carbon atoms, an alkenyloxy group of 3 to 16 carbon atoms, or an alkyl group of 1 to 12 carbon atoms substituted with an alkoxyl group of 1 to 10 carbon atoms, and said groups may be substituted with a halogen, and in cases in which an asymmetric carbon arises due to substitution or branching, may be either one of optically active and a racemic mixture; ring C represents any one of a trans-1,4-cyclohexylene group in which one CH₂ structure within said group or two or more non-adjacent CH₂ structures within said group may be replaced with -O- and/or -S-, a 1,4-phenylene group in which one CH structure within said group or two or more non-adjacent CH structures within said group may be replaced with -N=, a 1,4-cyclohexenylene group, a 1,4-

bicyclo(2.2.2)octylene group, a piperidine-1,4-diyl group, a naphthalene-2,6-diyl group, a trans-decahydronaphthalene-trans-2,6-diyl group, and a 1,2,3,4-tetrahydronaphthalene-2,6-diyl group, and said groups may be substituted with either one of a cyano group and a halogen; ring B represents any one of general formulas (I-1) to (I-9)

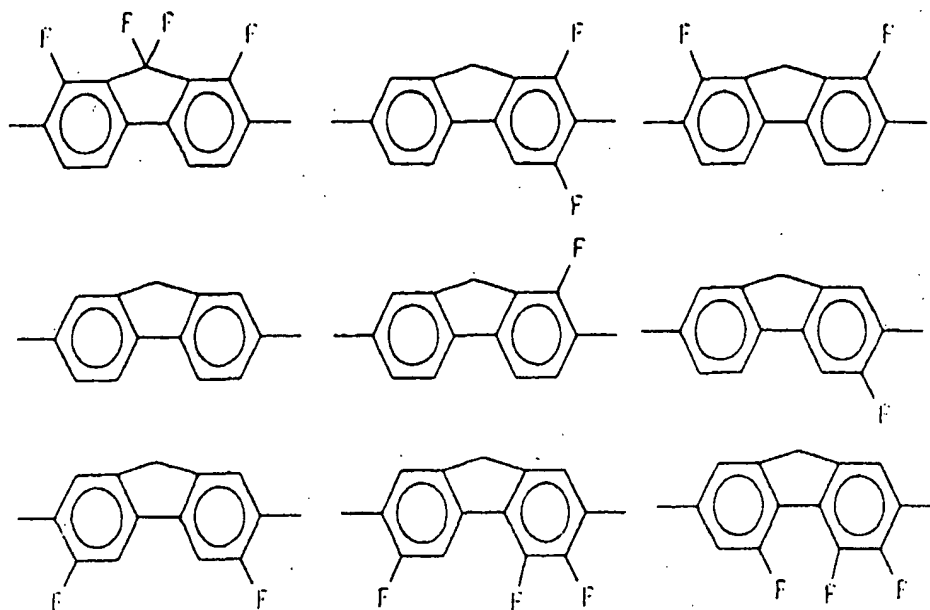


(wherein, X^1 , X^3 , X^4 , X^5 , X^6 , X^8 , X^9 and X^{10} each represent, independently, any one of a hydrogen atom, a chlorine atom and a fluorine atom, provided that conditions described below are satisfied:

- a. in (I-1), in a case in which at least one of X^3 , X^4 , X^5 and X^6 represents a fluorine atom, and a remainder represent hydrogen atoms, then at least one of X^1 , X^8 , X^9 and X^{10} represents either one of a chlorine atom and a fluorine atom,
- b. in (I-1), in a case in which at least one of X^1 , X^8 , X^9 and X^{10} represents a fluorine atom, and a remainder represent hydrogen atoms, then at least one of X^3 , X^4 , X^5 and X^6 represents either one of a chlorine atom and a fluorine atom,
- c. in (I-4) to (I-9), hydrogen atoms within a ring may be replaced with a cyano group or a halogen);
- d. in (I-2), ring B represents any one of general formulas as follows:



and in (I-3), ring B represents any one of general formulas as follows:



L^2 represents any one of $-\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2-$, $-\text{C}\equiv\text{C}-$, $-(\text{CH}_2)_4-$, $-\text{CF}=\text{CF}-$, $-\text{OCH}_2-$, $-\text{CH}_2\text{O}-$, $-\text{OCF}_2-$, $-\text{CF}_2\text{O}-$, $-\text{CO}_2-$, $-\text{OCO}-$, $-\text{CH}=\text{N}-\text{N}=\text{CH}-$, $-\text{CH}=\text{CH}-\text{CH}_2-\text{CH}_2-$, $-\text{CH}_2-\text{CH}_2-\text{CH}=\text{CH}-$ and a single bond; n represents 0 or 1, ~~then L^2 , when present, represents a single bond;~~ Y represents any one of a hydrogen atom, a fluorine atom, a chlorine atom, a trifluoromethoxy group, a difluoromethoxy group, a trifluoromethyl group, a 3,3,3-trifluoroethoxy group, a cyano group, a straight chain alkyl group of 1 to 16 carbon atoms, a straight chain alkenyl group of 2 to 16 carbon atoms, a straight chain alkyloxy group of 1 to 12 carbon atoms, and a straight chain alkenyloxy group of 2 to 16 carbon atoms, provided that cases described below are excluded:

- i. a case in which ring B represents (I-2), n represents 0, R represents an alkyl group and Y represents an alkyl group,
- ii. a case in which ring B represents (I-3), n represents 0, R represents an alkyl group and Y represents an alkoxy group,
- iii. a case in which ring B represents (I-4), n represents 0, R represents an alkyl group and Y represents either one of an alkyl group and a cyano group,
- iv. a case in which ring B represents (I-8), n represents 0, R represents an alkyl group and Y represents an alkyl group,
- v. a case in which ring B represents (I-4), n represents 1, ring C represents a 1,4-phenylene group, L² represents -CO₂-, R represents an alkyl group and Y represents any one of an alkyl group, an alkoxy group and a cyano group,
- vi. a case in which ring B represents (I-4), n represents 1, ring C represents a 1,4-phenylene group, L² represents -OCO-, R represents an alkyl group and Y represents an alkoxy group,
- vii. a case in which ring B represents (I-2), n represents 1, ring C represents a 1,4-cyclohexylene group, L² represents -CO₂-, R represents an alkyl group and Y represents an alkyl group,
- viii. a case in which ring B represents (I-1), and X⁹ and X¹⁰ represent fluorine atoms, and
- ix. a case in which ring B represents (I-3), and X³, X⁴, X⁵ and X⁶ simultaneously represent fluorine atoms, and applying similarly to compounds equivalent to those above described using combinations of abbreviations).

U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 10/030,185

Amendment Accompanying Request for Continued Examination filed November 17, 2004

Reply to AA dated November 5, 2004 and

FOA dated May 19, 2004

Claim 2 (previously presented): A compound according to claim 1, wherein ring C represents a 1,4-phenylene group or a trans-1,4-cyclohexylene group which may be substituted with at least one fluorine atom.

Claim 3 (Previously presented): A compound according to claim 1, wherein L^2 represents any one of -OCO-, -CO₂-, -CH₂CH₂- and a single bond.

Claim 4 (canceled).

Claim 5 (previously presented): A compound according to claim 1, wherein L^2 represents a single bond.

Claim 6 (previously presented): A compound according to claim 1, wherein ring B represents (I-3) or (I-4).

Claims 7-8 (canceled).

U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 10/030,185

Amendment Accompanying Request for Continued Examination filed November 17, 2004

Reply to AA dated November 5, 2004 and

FOA dated May 19, 2004

Claim 9 (previously presented): A compound according to claim 1, wherein ring C represents a 1,4-phenylene group or a trans-1,4-cyclohexylene group which may be substituted with at least one fluorine atom, and ring B represents any one of (I-1), (I-2), (I-3) and (I-4).

Claim 10 (previously presented): A compound according to claim 1, wherein ring C represents a 1,4-phenylene group or a trans-1,4-cyclohexylene group which may be substituted with at least one fluorine atom, ring B represents any one of (I-1), (I-2), (I-3) and (I-4), and L^2 represents a single bond.

Claim 11 (Previously presented): A compound according to claim 1, wherein ring C represents a 1,4-phenylene group or a trans-1,4-cyclohexylene group which may be substituted with at least one fluorine atom, ring B represents any one of (I-1), (I-2), (I-3) and (I-4), n represents 1, and L^2 represents a single bond.

Claim 12 (canceled).

U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 10/030,185

Amendment Accompanying Request for Continued Examination filed November 17, 2004

Reply to AA dated November 5, 2004 and

FOA dated May 19, 2004

Claim 13 (previously presented): A compound according to claim 1, wherein R represents either one of a straight chain alkyl group of 1 to 12 carbon atoms and a straight chain alkenyl group of 2 to 12 carbon atoms, and Y represents any one of a fluorine atom, a chlorine atom, a trifluoromethoxy group, a trifluoromethyl group, a difluoromethoxy group, a 3,3,3-trifluoroethoxy group and a cyano group.

Claim 14 (original): A liquid crystal composition incorporating at least one compound according to any one of claims 1 through 13.

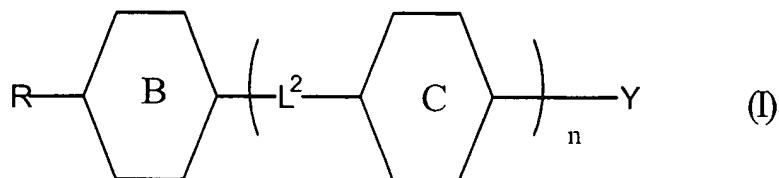
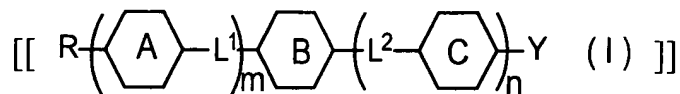
Claim 15 (original): A liquid crystal display element utilizing a liquid crystal composition according to claim 14.

Claim 16 (original): An active matrix driven liquid crystal display element utilizing a liquid crystal composition according to claim 14.

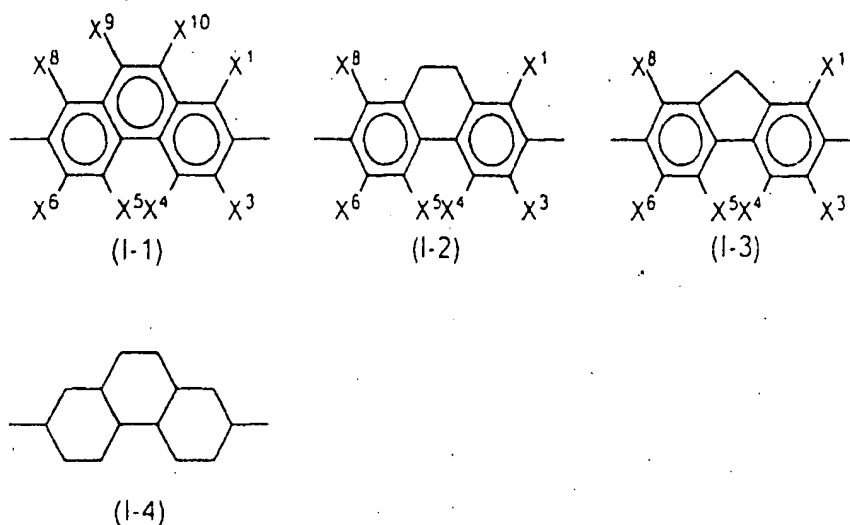
Claim 17 (original): A supertwisted nematic liquid crystal display element utilizing a liquid crystal composition according to claim 14.

Claim 18 (currently amended): A fused ring compound represented by a general formula

(I)



(wherein, R represents an alkyl group or an alkyl group of 1 to 12 carbon atoms substituted with an alkoxy group of 1 to 10 carbon atoms, and said groups may be substituted with a halogen, and in cases in which an asymmetric carbon arises due to substitution or branching, may be either one of optically active and a racemic mixture; ring C represents any one of a trans-1,4-cyclohexylene group in which one CH₂ structure within said group or two or more non-adjacent CH₂ structures within said group may be replaced with -O- and/or -S-, a 1,4-phenylene group in which one CH structure within said group or two or more non-adjacent CH structures within said group may be replaced with -N=, a 1,4-cyclohexenylene group, a 1,4-bicyclo(2.2.2)octylene group, a piperidine-1,4-diyl group, a naphthalene-2,6-diyl group, a trans-decahydronaphthalene-trans-2,6-diyl group, and a 1,2,3,4-tetrahydronaphthalene-2,6-diyl group, and said groups may be substituted with either one of a cyano group and a halogen; ring B represents any one of general formulas (I-1) to (I-4)



(wherein, X^1 , X^3 , X^4 , X^5 , X^6 , X^8 , X^9 and X^{10} each represent, independently, any one of a hydrogen atom, a chlorine atom and a fluorine atom, provided that conditions described below are satisfied:

a. in (I-1) and (I-2), in a case in which at least one of X^3 , X^4 , X^5 and X^6 represents a fluorine atom, and a remainder represent hydrogen atoms, then at least one of X^1 , X^8 , X^9 and X^{10} represents either one of a chlorine atom and a fluorine atom, and

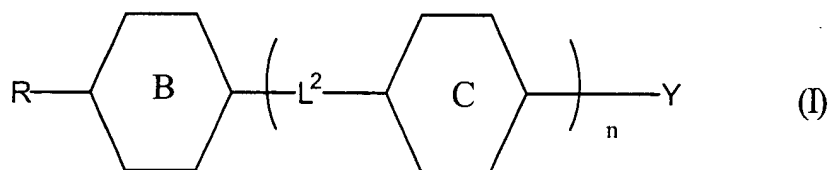
b. in (I-1) and (I-2), in a case in which at least one of X^1 , X^8 , X^9 and X^{10} represents a fluorine atom, and a remainder represent hydrogen atoms, then at least one of X^3 , X^4 , X^5 and X^6 represents either one of a chlorine atom and a fluorine atom, and

~~c. in (I-3) to (I-4), hydrogen atoms within a ring may be replaced with a cyano group or a halogen);~~

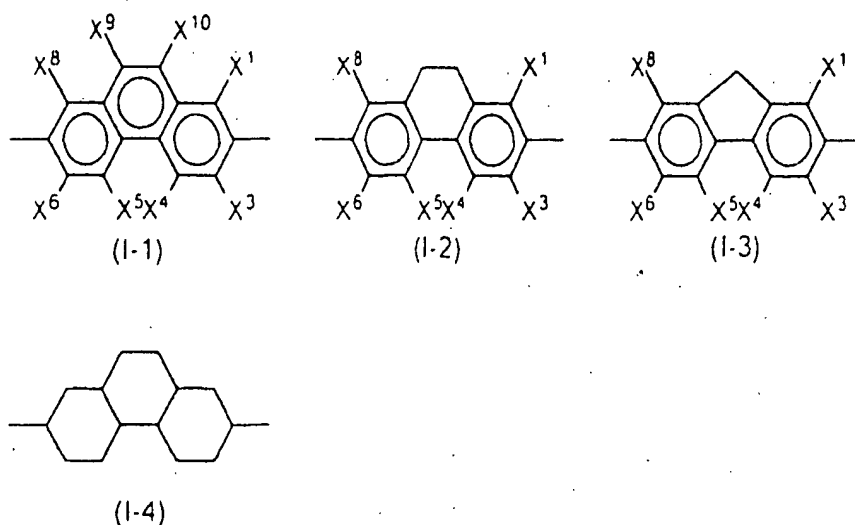
and n represents 1, then L^2 when present, represents a single bond; and Y represents a fluorine atom.

Claim 19 (currently amended): A fused ring compound represented by a general formula

(I)



(wherein, R represents an alkyl group or alkoxy group of 1 to 16 carbon atoms, an alkenyl group of 2 to 16 carbon atoms, an alkenyloxy group of 3 to 16 carbon atoms, or an alkyl group of 1 to 12 carbon atoms substituted with an alkoxy group of 1 to 10 carbon atoms, and said groups may be substituted with a halogen, and in cases in which an asymmetric carbon arises due to substitution or branching, may be either one of optically active and a racemic mixture; ring C represents a trans-1,4-cyclohexylene group which may be substituted with a fluorine atom, or a 1,4-phenylene; and ring B represents any one of general formulas (I-1) to (I-4)



(wherein, X^1 , X^3 , X^4 , X^5 , X^6 , X^8 , X^9 and X^{10} each represent, independently, any one of a hydrogen atom, a chlorine atom and a fluorine atom, provided that conditions described below are satisfied:

a. in (I-1) and (I-2), in a case in which at least one of X^3 , X^4 , X^5 and X^6 represents a fluorine atom, and a remainder represent hydrogen atoms, then at least one of X^1 , X^8 , X^9 and X^{10} represents either one of a chlorine atom and a fluorine atom, and

b. in (I-1) and (I-2), in a case in which at least one of X^1 , X^8 , X^9 and X^{10} represents a fluorine atom, and a remainder represent hydrogen atoms, then at least one of X^3 , X^4 , X^5 and X^6 represents either one of a chlorine atom and a fluorine atom, ~~and~~

~~c. in (I-3) to (I-4), hydrogen atoms within a ring may be replaced with a halogen);~~

L^2 represents a single bond; n represents 1.